

Message Text

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-----261325Z 051016 /42

R 260915Z JAN 77

FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 5193

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IT

SUBJECT: LOMBARDY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AT ELECTION DAY PLUS 249.

SUMMARY: IN AFTER-MATH JUNE 1976 ELECTIONS, DC PARTY ORGANIZATION AT CITY, PROVINCIAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL HAS FINALLY CHOSEN NEW OFFICERS AND, DESPITE MONUMENTAL CONFUSION, LAST LINE IS THAT TODAY ALL FACTIONS OPPOSE ANY PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT WITH COMMUNISTS. END SUMMARY.

1. SCENARIO OF DC PARTY SELECTION OF NEW SECRETARIES AT MILAN, PROVINCE OF MILAN AND REGION OF LOMBARDY WORTHY OF MOZART LIBRETTIST. EVEN MOST CYNICAL AND EXPERIENCED INTERPRETERS OF LOCAL POLITICS UNABLE AGREE WHICH PARTY FACTION WON OR LOST OR WHOM NEWLY ELECTED SECRETARIES REALLY REPRESENT.

2. FOR PAST 15 YEARS LOMBARDY HAS BEEN FIEFDOM OF DC LEFT WING (BASE). IT HAS BEEN RUN BY PRESENT MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE GIOVANNI MARCORA, A CONSUMATE BOSS WHO KNOWS HOW TO SPEND AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDY FUNDS (INCLUDING THOSE OF THE EC) FOR MAXIMUM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLITICAL RETURN. CITY OF MILAN, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN IN HANDS OF MORE CONSERVATIVE WING OF PARTY IN RUNNING WARFARE WITH BASE GROUP, ALTHOUGH NEARLY ALL MAJOR DC FACTIONS ACTIVE IN LOMBARDY.

3. THIS PATTERN BEGAN TO BLURR FOLLOWING DIVORCE REFERENDUM (1975), LOCAL ELECTIONS (1976) AND NATIONAL

ELECTIONS (JUNE 1976). LATTER WAS FOUGHT WITH GROWING EMPHASIS ON ISSUE OF COMMUNISM VERSUS ANTI-COMMUNISM, WITH REFERENDUM THEME STRESSED BY MILAN BASED CONSERVATIVE LAY DAILY IL GIORNALE WHICH HAS BECOME MAJOR POLITICAL FORCE. INITIAL DC REVERSES AND DRIVE TO REJUVENATE PARTY LED TO REMOVAL OF MANY OLD TIMERS FROM BOTH PARTY TICKET AND ORGANIZATION. AND LOCAL LEADERS ELECTED TO NATIONAL PARLIAMENT VACATED LOCAL POSITIONS, REQUIRING REPLACEMENT.

4. WHILE BASE GROUP WON HANDS DOWN AT CONGRESSES BEFORE JUNE 1976 ELECTIONS, (MILAN'S 0873) ITS TACTICS IN IMPROPERLY DROPPING CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES FROM AGREED LISTS AT MOMENT OF FILING CONTRIBUTED TO REVOLT BY OTHER FACTIONS. (MILAN'S 1266). AMONG THESE WAS RECENTLY CREATED CLERICALLY ORIENTED COMUNIONE E LIBERAZIONE (C & L) WITH MAIN STRONGHOLD IN MILAN AND IN UNIVERSITIES. MAJOR CHANGE, HOWEVER, WAS EMERGENCY IN JUNE ELECTIONS OF FORMER MILAN CITY COUNCILMAN, MASSIMO DE CAROLIS, YOUNG, HONEST, AGGRESSIVE, AMBITIOUS AND SMART LAWYER, AS UNMATCHED VOTE GETTER AND OUTSPOKEN ANTI-COMMUNIST ELECTED TO PARLIAMENT IN JUNE.

5. DE CAROLIS SET OUT TO CAPTURE CONTROL OF MILAN CITY AND PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION. IN THIS HE HAD (AND HAS) SUPPORT OF IL GIORNALE AND SEEMED WELL ON ROAD TO SUCCESS AFTER SMASHING SUCCESS IN EARLY DECEMBER AT DC PROVINCIAL CONGRESS. (MILAN'S 2639). DE CAROLIS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOWEVER, AROUSED IRE OF OLD LINE DC BIG WIGS IN ROME WHOM HE CHEERFULLY PROPOSED TO DUMP TO BUILD NEW PARTY. HE BROUGHT DOWN WRATH OF DC LEFT FOR HIS UNVARNISHED ATTACKS ON COMMUNISTS, HIS OPEN SUPPORT FOR NATO AND HIS REJECTION OF THIRD WORLDISM. AND HE ANGERED CLERICAL FACTION OF DC FOR HIS REJECTION OF THE DC AS A CATHOLIC PARTY AND HIS INSISTENCE THAT IT MUST BE A LAY ORGANIZATION. WHILE THIS APPROACH MAY CONTINUE TO GIVE DE CAROLIS POWERFUL PUBLIC SUPPORT, IT FAILED TO ENDEAR HIM TO THE OTHER PROFESSIONAL POLITICIANS WHO CONTROL PARTY ORGANIZATION.

6. NEVERTHELESS, AS PROCESS OF SELECTING NEW PARTY LEADERSHIP BEGAN, DE CAROLIS APPEARED TO BE LEADING FORCE WHO BASED HIS POSITION ON 1) REFUSAL BRING COMMUNISTS INTO ANY GOVERNMENT WITH DC AND 2) GOVERNING WITH SOCIALISTS AND OTHER MINOR CENTER PARTIES.

PROVINCIAL SECRETARY

7. WHETHER WORRIED THAT DE CAROLIS WOULD CAPTURE LEADERSHIP OF ENTIRE DC ANTI-COMMUNIST ELECTORATE HERE, WHICH IS LARGE MAJORITY, OR DISSATISFIED WITH MARCORA'S GREATER RECEPTIVITY TO WORKING PRAGMATICALLY WITH THE COMMUNISTS OR SOME COMBINATION OF BOTH, MILAN DC DEPUTY SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE 38 YEAR OLD ROBERTO MAZZOTTA INLATE DECEMBER BOLTED BASE GROUP. BRIGHT, ATTRACTIVE, EXPERIENCED, AMBITIOUS AND LONG SEEN AS A COMER, MAZZOTTA JUSTIFIED HIS DEFECTION BY MARCORA'S CLAIMED RESIGNATION TO COMMUNIST MEMBERSHIP IN GOVERNMENT. (SEE MILAN'S 2646).

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8. WITH MAZZOTTA'S BACKERS, A NEW COALITION (THE CARTEL) OF DE CAROLIS, COMUNIOE AND LIBERAZIONE, THE CENTER LEFT FACTION LED BY MINISTER OF POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS VITTORINO COLOMBO AND THE FAMILY FARMERS ORGANIZATION(COLTIVATORI DIRETTI) ELECTED MAZZOTTA AS PROVINCIAL SECRETARY IN APPARENT DEFEAT FOR MARCORA.

9. IN ORDER TO KEEP MAZZOTTA INDEPENDENT OF DE CAROLIS, HOWEVER, MARCORA GROUP ABSTAINED SO THAT MAZZOTTA COULD HAVE BEEN ELECTED WITHOUT DE CAROLIS VOTES. THUS BEGAN SERIES OF MANEUVERS BY BOTH LEFT AND RIGHT TO SHOW THAT MAZZOTTA AND REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL SECRETARIES SUCCESSIVELY ELECTED WERE THEIR CAPTIVES.

REGIONAL SECRETARY.

10. GIUSEPPE GUZZETTI, 42, ELECTED REGIONAL SECRETARY ON JANUARY 10 WITH 36 OF 72 VOTES. (MILAN'S 0129). A WELL KNOWN MARCORA SUPPORTER AND COLLABORATOR OF REGIONAL PRESIDENT GOLFARI (OF BASE), HE HAD VOTES OF MARCORA, VITTORINO COLOMBO, THE MORO FACTION AND OTHER LOCAL GROUPS. WHILE BASE THEREUPON CLAIMED THAT IT HAD RE-UNITED AND REGAINED ITS PRIMACY IN LOMBARDY, CENTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARGUED THAT MARCORA HAD TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO CENTER ON RELATIONS WITH COMMUNISTS IN ORDER TO LET GUZZETTI SQUEEK BY.

CITY SECRETARY

11. ALBETO GAROCCHIO, 38, ELECTED ILAN CITY SECRETARY JANUARY 18. (MILAN'S 0127). A LEADER OF COMUNIONE AND LIBERAZIONE, HE WAS BACKED BY MAZZOTTA, MARCORA, VITTORINO COLOMBO, THE COLTIVATORI DIRETTI AND OTHER CENTER-RIGHT ELEMENTS. AGAIN, MARCORA WING CLAIMED TO HAVE DEFEATED DE CAROLIS WHO OPPOSED ELECTION AND THAT, THEREFORE, LONG TERM CENTER-RIGHT CONTROL OF DC MILAN BROKEN BY LEFT. GAROCCHIO AND HIS SUPPORTERS, HOWEVER, DENY THIS INTERPRETATION CLAIMING THAT MARCORA AGAIN OBLIGED TO SHIFT TO RIGHT ON COMMUNIST ISSUE TO AVOID ISOLATION.

12. IN THIS FINE ITALIAN POLITICAL MANEUVERING, POOR OBSERVER HAS TROUBLE TELLING WHICH END OF SPAGHETTI HAS COME TO SURFACE. AND EVEN PRESS AND PARTY AFICIONADOS CONFESS TO BAFFLEMENT. CLEARLY, HOWEVER, FIERCE STRUGGLE, OFTEN QUARTERR BACKED FROM ROME, CONTINUES FOR CONTROL OF DC PARTY ORGANIZATION WHICH IS SEEN LOCALLY AS HAVING POWERFUL WEIGHT IN NATIONAL PICTURE.

13. AFTER CONVERSATIONS WITH PROTAGONISTS IN AND OUT OF DC, WE REACH SEVERAL CONCLUSIONS. FIRST, DC IS WELL ALONG IN INSTALLING YOUNGER GENERATION OF LEADERSHIP THROUGHOUT LOMBARDY. WHILE BIG NAMES LIKE MARCORA, BASSETTI, GRANELLI, VITTORINO AND GINO COLOMBO ARE STILL POWERS, THEY ARE NOW ONE OR TWO LEVELS REMOVED FROM RUNNING ORGANIZATION. MOREOVER, NEW DC LEADERSHIP AGREES IN TELLING US THAT THERE IS SIGNIFICANT REVIVAL IN PARTICIPATION BY YOUNG PEOPLE IN PARTY. SMILARLY, MILITANT COMUNIONE E LIBERAZIONE HAS GROWN STEADILY IN THIS AREA AND IS INCREASINGLY A POWER. SECOND, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POWER OF MARCORA'S THIRD FORCE ORIENTED FACTION DOES
APPEAR TO BE DIMINISHED. WHILE MOST LOMBARDY PROVINCIAL
SECRETARIES ARE BASE SYMPATHIZERS ITS, ITS PRIMACY
APPEARS MUCH LESS FIRM THAN IN PAST. THIRD, THERE HAS
BEEN GRADUAL BUT UNMISTAKEABLE SHIFT IN POLITICAL
CENTER OF GRAVITY ON PRIMARY ISSUE OF RELATIONS WITH
COMMUNISTS. PRIOR TO AND JUST AFTER JUNE 1976 ELECTIONS,
WE HAD SENSATION OF MEASURABLE RECEPTIVITY BY DC LEFT TO
GOVERNING WITH COMMUNISTS ALTOUGH BASE LEADERS HAVE
OPPOSED BRINGING PCI INTO GOVERNMENT IN CONVERSATIONS WITH US
AT LEAST SINCE LOMBARDY REGIONAL CRISIS IN OCTOBER 1976.
WHATEVER BASE LEADERSHIP MAY REALLY THINK, TODAY ALL
LOCAL DC FACTIONS PUBLICALLY AND PRIVATELY RULE OUT THIS
ABSOLUTELY. THIS IMPORTANT CHANGE DUE IN LARGE PART TO DE CAROLIS'
VIGOROUS ANTI-COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN THAT MAY NOT HAVE MADE
DC LEFT MORE WARY OF COMMUNISTS BUT HAS SURELY CONVINCED IT
PARTY WOULD BE SPLIT IF PCI BROUGHT INTO DC GOVERNMENT.
REAL ISSUE MAY BE A MORE SUBTLE - JUDGMENT ABOUT PROSPECTS
FOR EVENTUAL PSI ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS RE-ALLY WITH DC.
LEFT WING OF DC DOUBTS THIS LIKELIHOOD WHILE CENTER AND RIGHT
MAKE DC-PSI GOVERNMENT CENTRAL OBJECTIVE.
FOURTH, WHILE QUESTION OF RELATIONS WITH COMMUNISTS HAS SPLIT
PSDI, PRI AND LIBERALS HERE AND HAS PUT PSI INTO
GRAVE CRISIS, DC IN LOMBARDY APPEARS TO HAVE BECOME
MORE RATHERN THAN LESS UNITED ON THIS ISSUE.
FIFTH, WE CONCLUDE THAT ALTHOUGH COMMUNIST ISSUE HAS BEEN A
REAL ONE HERE, MORE IMPORTANT CAUSE FOR RUNNING PARTY
DONNEYBROOK IS STRUGGLE FOR POWER AMONG VERY TOUGH,
AMBITIOUS POLITICIANS IN WHICH YOUNGER MEN ARE FIGHTING
THEIR WAY TO TOP WHILE GENERATION IN LATE FORTIES AND
FIFTIES IS WAGING REAR GUARD DEFENSE FROM THEIR NEW
POSITIONS OF STRENGTH IN ROME.

14. IN ALL, DC DRAMA IN LOMBARDY MAY NOT BE PARTICULARLY
UPLIFTING MORALLY. BUT IT IS ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT
FOR SURVIVAL OF ITALIAN DEMOCRACY.FINA
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MILAN00155
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770028-0445
Format: TEL
From: MILAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770117/aaaaaioic.tel
Line Count: 268
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 442908d1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3497228
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LOMBARDY CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AT ELECTION DAY PLUS 249. SUMMARY: IN AFTER-MATH JUNE 1976 ELECTIONS, DC PARTY ORGANIZATION AT CITY, PROVINCIAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IT
To: ROME
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/442908d1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009